

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SNM-02 SSO-00 CCO-00 /028 R

DRAFTED BY ARA-LA:G.BROWN:MM

APPROVED BY ARA:WHLUERS

S/S:F.ORTIZ

ARA:WDROGERS (SUBSTANCE)

S/NM: D.ERNST

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 018861 TOSEC 010255

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM ROGERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM - PROPOSED REPLY FROM PRESIDENT
FORD TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA ON NARCOTICS COMMISSIONS.

(S/S:7601547)

1. THE PROBLEM.

TO REPLY PROMPTLY TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S LETTER TO
PRESIDENT FORD TO GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE MEXICAN
INITIATIVE WITHOUT BINDING OURSELVES TO AN ORGANIZATIONAL
ARRANGEMENT ON OUR SIDE THAT MATCHES EXACTLY THEIRS AND
TO KEEP PRIMARY ATTENTION ON THE EFFORT PRESENTLY UNDERWAY
IN MEXICO.

2. DISCUSSION.

YOU HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS OF DISCUSSIONS ECHEVERRIA
HELD WITH AMBASSADOR JOVA AND CONGRESSMEN WOLFF AND GILMAN
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IN WHICH HE PROPOSED BROADLY BASED TWIN COMMISSIONS AND

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES TO INCREASE COMMITMENT TO THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM. YOU HAVE CONVEYED TO ECHEVERRIA THROUGH AMBASSADOR JOVA OUR POSITIVE RESPONSE AND INFORMED CONGRESSMAN WOLFF OF OUR POSITIVE APPRAISAL OF THE DISCUSSIONS IN MEXICO. (PER SECTO 1044)

PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT FORD OUTLINING HIS PROPOSALS HAS BEEN TRANSMITTED TO THE WHITE HOUSE. (STATE 15201 TOSEC 10079)

IN REPLYING, WE WANT TO BE ENCOURAGING AND RESPONSIVE TO THE ECHEVERRIA INITIATIVE WITHOUT COMMITTING OURSELVES AT THIS POINT TO FORMING A BROADLY BASED COMMISSION LIKE HIS THAT WOULD INCLUDE A NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND CONGRESS. (A NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS UNDER STUDY BY THE DOMESTIC COUNCIL WOULD PROBABLY SERVE WELL AS AN ORGANIZATION FOR OUR SIDE IN GENERAL SIMILAR TO THE MEXICANS.)

FURTHER, WE DO NOT WANT THE ECHEVERRIA INITIATIVE TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRESENT EFFORT UNDERWAY IN MEXICO AND NOW ENTERING ITS CRITICAL PHASE.

THE PROPOSED REPLY, BASED ON THESE CONSIDERATIONS, HAS BEEN APPROVED BY S/NM AND ARA, AND WE BELIEVE IS CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT THINKING IN THE DOMESTIC COUNCIL ON THE OVERALL NARCOTICS PROGRAM. PROPOSED TEXT IS AS FOLLOWS FOR YOUR APPROVAL.

QUOTE: DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR LETTER CONCERNING OUR MUTUAL EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH THE TRAGIC PROBLEM OF DRUG ABUSE WHICH AFFECTS SO MANY CITIZENS OF BOTH OUR NATIONS. I WELCOME YOUR INITIATIVE, AND VIEW IT AS A MOST IMPORTANT PROPOSAL.

I HAVE DIRECTED THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF TO BEGIN NOW WITH THE DEPARTMENTS OF GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER WAYS IN WHICH WE SHOULD ORGANIZE OURSELVES TO COLLABORATE CLOSELY WITH THE COMMISSION AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE YOU ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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ESTABLISHING IN MEXICO. YOUR IDEA OF PARALLEL ORGANIZATIONS, IN GENERAL SIMILAR TO EACH OTHER, SEEMS APPROPRIATE TO OUR MUTUAL DESIRE TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR COOPERATION.

AS YOU SUGGEST, THE INITIATIVE SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD AS DEVELOPMENT WHICH CAN ENHANCE THE MEASURES OUR GOVERNMENTS ARE PRESENTLY TAKING, BOTH SEPARATELY AND TOGETHER. OUR SUCCESS IN REDUCING THE CRITICAL NARCOTICS PROBLEM

NOW CONFRONTING US WILL DEPEND IN LARGE PART ON THE VIGOR WITH WHICH WE PURSUE EFFORTS ALREADY UNDERWAY; THE EFFECT OF THIS NEW INITIATIVE WILL BE FELT OVER THE LONGER TERM. THUS, I AM HEARTENED BY REPORTS OF THE INTENSIVE ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY BEING CARRIED OUT BY YOUR GOVERNMENT, AND LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING PROGRESS.

FOR OUR PART, I HAVE FORMED A TASK FORCE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE WHITE HOUSE TO IMPROVE OUR EFFECTIVENESS IN THE UNITED STATES AGAINST THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC COMING ACROSS THE BORDER AND AGAINST CONTRABAND MOVING FROM THIS SIDE INTO MEXICO. THESE MATTERS, IT SEEMS TO ME, MIGHT BE SUBJECTS OF MUTUAL INTEREST APPROPRIATE FOR THE TWO SIDES TO TAKE UNDER CONTINUING REVIEW IN THE CONTEXT OF YOUR INITIATIVE.

I AM PLEASED THAT YOUR INITIATIVE INCLUDES THE PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION ASPECTS OF THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM, AS WELL AS THE LAW ENFORCEMENT ASPECT. AS YOU KNOW, THE CONCEPT OF A FEDERAL PROGRAM WHICH BALANCES THE EFFORT TO CONTROL THE DEMAND FOR DRUGS WITH AN EFFORT TO CONTROL THE SUPPLY OF DRUGS IS THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR PROGRAM TO REDUCE DRUG ABUSE. YOU MAY BE ASSURED THAT OUR SIDE, ALSO, WILL INCLUDE FULL REPRESENTATION OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE DRUG PROGRAM.

ALONG THESE LINES, I EXPECT TO HAVE SHORTLY CONCRETE PROPOSALS FOR ACTION ON OUR PART TO MATCH THE NEW EFFORT YOU HAVE BEGUN. AT THAT POINT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR MY REPRESENTATIVES TO MEET WITH YOURS TO ASSURE WE ARE BOTH MOVING AHEAD IN THE COORDINATED MANNER CONTEMPLATED IN YOUR LETTER.

LET ME ALSO USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR THE CORDIALITY AND GOOD WILL YOU AND MEMBERS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT HAVE CONSISTENTLY EXTENDED TO MY REPRESENTATIVES,
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AMBASSADOR JOVA AND AMBASSADOR VANCE, AND TO ATTORNEY GENERAL LEVI IN HIS RECENT MEETING WITH ATTORNEY GENERAL OJEDA PAULLADA. I HOPE, TOO, THAT WE CAN KEEP IN TOUCH TO MAINTAIN THE SPIRIT OF CLOSE COLLABORATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

WITH BEST REGARDS, SINCERELY, GERALD FORD. UNQUOTE.

3. RECOMMENDATION.

THAT YOU AUTHORIZE THE PROPOSED RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA FOR TRANSMISSION TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

DRAFTED:ARA-LA:G.BROWN

CLEARED BY: ARA:WHLUERS - S/S-O:F.ORTIZ - S/NM:D.ERNST
ARA:WROGERS (SUBSTANCE) SISCO

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